



Chalk Talk

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Letter from the Editor

Dear Subscribers,

When I was growing up, literacy and numeracy were referred to as the **3 R's** — reading, writing and arithmetic — the building blocks of all educational achievement. These are the basic skills we all use throughout our lives to achieve our career goals, to conduct the business of a household — paying bills, buying a home, securing a loan, signing legal documents — and to connect us to the outside world by reading books, magazines, newspapers and by participating in important civic duties such as voting.

In this high-speed modern age where technology, science and communications rule the day, a good grasp of the 3 R's at the earliest age possible is essential to ensure a child will not be left behind. For more than a decade now the emphasis on literacy, especially in the early grades, has had a huge impact on improving literacy rates. Similarly in recent years there has been a renewed interest in looking at how numeracy, especially when combined with strong literacy skills, can contribute to a brighter future for our children.

Learning to fundraise for a worthy cause at a young age is a great way to establish good money habits. During a family trip to Thailand in January, three Canadian children, ages 8, 11 and 13, became aware of the precarious life of the Asian Elephant. Many have been inadvertently harmed by landmines. As the children toured the hospital where the elephants were being fitted with prosthetic limbs, they resolved to raise funds to help these elephants who required extensive care after their surgeries. Upon their return home, this desire to help resulted in the start of a fundraising campaign they called "Give a penny ... it just makes cents" which uses both their literacy and numeracy skills. They produced a logo, a promotional pamphlet and have made many live presentations at their schools. At the same time, they learned an invaluable lesson about how collecting small amounts of money can accumulate into substantial donations that can make a difference.

Habits that are begun when you're young, stay with you for a lifetime. This week's issue of *Chalk Talk* features information on **RBC Royal Bank® Financial Lifeskills Junior package — Save, Share, Spend**,

Give a penny ... it just makes cents!

To learn more about **The Thai Elephant Conservation Centre**, check out their website at www.changthai.com where you can also find out more about [The Elephant Hospital](#). The Centre is home to 100 Asian elephants ranging in age from calves to 79 years of age. The Centre's goal is to help to protect Thai elephants from extinction, to provide information to the public, and to conduct research related to the diagnosis and treatment of injured and sick elephants.



Our young fundraisers take the ride of a lifetime.



Educators can learn more about how to help their students to develop good money management skills by ordering the **RBC Royal Bank® Financial Lifeskills Junior package — Save, Share, Spend** — for grades 4-6 which features a teacher's guide, a class set of 35 piggybank templates, and a poster. Order here: www.4edu.ca/tors/RBC3.



**RBC ROYAL BANK® FINANCIAL LIFESKILLS
JUNIOR PACKAGE**

This free curriculum-based program, combined with [the Intermediate and Senior Financial Lifeskills packages](#), is designed to cultivate in students, in a grade-appropriate manner, an interest in financial and career planning. The **Junior** program introduces the concept of learning to differentiate between 'needs' and 'wants'.

Talk features information on **RBC Royal Bank @ Financial Lifeskills Junior package — Save, Share, Spend** — this useful classroom resource can help teachers of grades 4-6 teach their students to set goals, create a savings plan, and help fund a worthy cause. It also includes links to sites dealing with literacy and numeracy.

CoEd Communications is dedicated to supporting the important work of teachers by providing resources on a range of topics for the classroom. We invite you to visit our website at 4edu.ca to view the many free teachers' resources on offer.

As always, your feedback is important to us. [Let us know your thoughts.](#)



Mary Kovack

and 'wants'.

Remember, too, that the application deadline for the [RBC Royal Bank @ Financial Lifeskills Scholarships](#) is **May 12, 2006**. The scholarships, which are the culminating point of the RBC Royal Bank Financial Lifeskills Education Program, honour the achievements of senior students across Canada pursuing studies in any field. They recognize hard work, innovation and solid career direction.

To be eligible, students require a minimum grade average of 65 per cent and acceptance into a Canadian college or university (and/or CEGEP in Quebec) for full time study in the 2006 Fall/Winter session. Ten awards of \$2,006 will be distributed to students across the country. For details and to download applications for this year's scholarship, please click [here](#).

QUOTE OF THE WEEK

"In Asia, many elephants lose their legs to landmines. On a trip to Thailand with my family in January, I saw three of these elephants at the Elephant Hospital in Thailand where they were given fake legs. Elephants are a lot like humans. They are smart, very gentle, and like being part of a family. Elephants are beautiful. We should save them. If you give us some of your pennies, you can help the elephants to get new legs.

— Ellis, a grade 3 student who recently visited the Elephant Conservation Centre in Thailand, talking about the reasons why she and her brother and sister started the 'Give a penny...it just makes cents' campaign which in its first month has raised over \$500 in pennies.



Facts & Figures



According to a newly released research paper by Statistics Canada, [The Importance of Functional Literacy, Reading and Math Skills and Labour Market Outcomes of High School Drop-Outs:](#)

- Experiencing learning difficulties as a child, increases the probability of dropping out by 19%.
- Educational level achieved by the parents exerts a strong influence on a child's educational attainment.
- Functional literacy is a more significant measure of labour market outcomes (incomes) than is formal education.
- The study concludes that there is little doubt that literacy and numeracy skills contribute to an individual's economic and social well-being.

Education News and Recommended Links

[First-Ever Pan-Canadian Forum tackling literacy and numeracy challenges](#) — CNW Group, Ontario Newsroom, November 25, 2005

"Ensuring that every child has strong foundational literacy and numeracy skills is one of the most serious and underestimated challenges we face in education across Canada," said Kennedy. "Succeeding at this challenge will be both an investment in children today and in our country's future prosperity."

[Literacy Across the Curriculum Media Focus](#) — 2002 Study, Volume 16, No. 2 [pdf], The Centre for Literacy, Montreal, PQ

Connecting literacy, media and teaching in the schools, community and workplace. “[Numeracy](#) is now seen as the “mirror image of literacy” as applied to mathematics. International surveys are giving it equal weight, stressing the centrality of numbers in our lives, and the difficulties and fears faced by many adults when confronted by calculations.”

[K-3 Literacy And Numeracy Consultation Initiative](#) — 2005/2006 - Backgrounder, Ministry of Education, Alberta

“Alberta's K-12 education system is world class. Yet despite our best efforts, a significant number of students are not experiencing success as indicated by school-based and large-scale assessments. We invite you to participate in a consultation process to help identify how student learning in the areas of reading, writing, and mathematics in early years can be improved.”

[Beyond Beast of Burden: Elephants in Thai Culture](#) — Wendee Holtcamp, Animal Planet, The Discovery Channel



“In war and peace, Asian elephants have been a talisman to Thailand for thousands of years. Smaller and gentler than their African counterparts, they were well-suited for carrying kings or cargo. Young elephants were caught wild, trained in camps, and taught to work with people and respond to commands.”

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The opinions, conclusions and other information expressed in the preceding content do not necessarily reflect the views of and are not endorsed by CoEd Communications.

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